

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FDRE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00

AGR-20 SWF-02 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /152 W

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R 041022Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4154

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 3956

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, SWEL, BG

SUBJ: BANGLADESH FLOOD RELIEF

1. ALTHOUGH THE DEPARTMENT'S REVIEW OF OUR OPTIONS FOR US FLOOD RELIEF TO BANGLADESH WHICH WE UNDERSTOOD WAS TO BE MADE ABOUT AUGUST 20 (STATE 180210) HAS PRESUMABLY NOT YET BEEN COMPLETED, I SENSE FROM RECENT MESSAGES AND FROM THE CURIOUS DENOUEMENT OF THE BISCUIT OPERATION THAT WE MAY BE LOSING OUR BATTLE TO BRING ABOUT A RESPONSE OF ANY REAL MAGNITUDE. THE SITUATION APPEARS SERIOUS ENOUGH HERE TO REQUIRE ANOTHER EFFORT IN THE HOPE THAT THE FINAL DECISIONS HAVE NOT YET BEEN MADE.

2. FROM THE BEGINNING WE HAVE TRIED TO ENCOURAGE A RESPONSE COMBINING TWO ELEMENTS: FIRST, DEVELOPMENT/RELIEF PROJECTS WHICH WOULD ESSENTIALLY ADDRESS THE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS ARISING FROM THE FLOOD RATHER THAN PURELY "RELIEF AID"; AND SECOND, PL 480 TITLE I AND II FOODGRAIN ASSISTANCE WHICH WOULD MEET THE MOST CRITICAL PROBLEM--THE POTENTIALLY VERY SERIOUS FOOD SHORTAGE. ON FOOD, WE FELT THE NEEDS CLEARLY JUSTIFIED 25,000 TONS OF BISCUITS, 50,000 TONS OF PL 480 TITLE II FOODGRAINS, AND AN INCREASE IN TITLE I ALLOCATIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS PLANNED 100,000 TONS IN THE FIRST QUARTER TO 200,000 TONS.

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3. AGAINST THESE RECOMMENDATIONS, WHICH WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE

ARE REALISTIC, OUR PERFORMANCE SO FAR WILL BE SEEN HERE AS NOT A GREAT DEAL MORE THAN A TOKEN RESPONSE. WE HAVE OFFERED THE BDG AN ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENIENCE IN PERMITTING THEM TO REPROGRAM \$4 MILLION FROM A PREVIOUS GRANT TO FLOOD RELIEF ITEMS, BUT THIS HAS NOT BEEN "NEW" ASSISTANCE. AS NEW AID, WE HAVE GIVEN THEM BLANKETS AND TENTS, 40,000 DOLLARS WORTH OF SEED FOR REPLANTING, AND WE WILL BE GIVING THEM, I GATHER, A LITTLE OVER 5,000 TONS OF THE 25,000 TONS OF SURVIVAL BISCUITS WE TOLD THEM WE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE. (WE UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM ABOUT THE HIGH COST OF THESE BISCUITS BUT ARE NOT SO CLEAR WHY THIS WASN'T KNOWN WHEN WE WERE FIRST LED DOWN THE BISCUIT PATH.)

4. I NEED NOT REVIEW HERE THE STATISTICS PROVIDED IN OTHER MESSAGES WHICH CERTIFY THE GRAVITY OF THE NEED. THESE STATISTICS ARE NOW BEING REFLECTED IN A PALPABLE WAY IN THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN DACCA WHICH IS DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN DACCA'S 2954, A MESSAGE WHICH SHOULD BE READ AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE BACKGROUND FOR THIS TELEGRAM.

5. WE KNOW YOU CAN'T GET BLOOD OUT OF A TURNIP AND WE WILL HAVE TO ACCEPT IT IF OUR BUDGETARY AND FOODGRAIN SITUATION IS SO BAD THAT WE CAN'T DO MORE THAN IS PRESENTLY ON THE HORIZON. BUT THE NEED HERE IS REAL AND SO FAR WE HAVE NOT DONE A GREAT DEAL ABOUT IT, CERTAINLY NOT IN ANY WAY COMMENSURATE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS. I HOPE ALL THE DECISIONS AREN'T IN YET AND THAT IT WILL STILL BE POSSIBLE TO HELP IN A SIGNIFICANT WAY THROUGH SOME COMBINATION OF THE BISCUITS, TITLE I AND TITLE II FOODGRAINS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE SUMMARIZED IN DACCA'S 3821.
BOSTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISASTER RELIEF, REFUGEES, FOOD SHORTAGE, FLOODS, FOOD ASSISTANCE, PL 480 TITLE 1, PL 480 TITLE 2
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974DACCA03956
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740244-1070
From: DACCA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740977/aaaacnbu.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <27 FEB 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BANGLADESH FLOOD RELIEF
TAGS: EAID, SWEL, BG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005